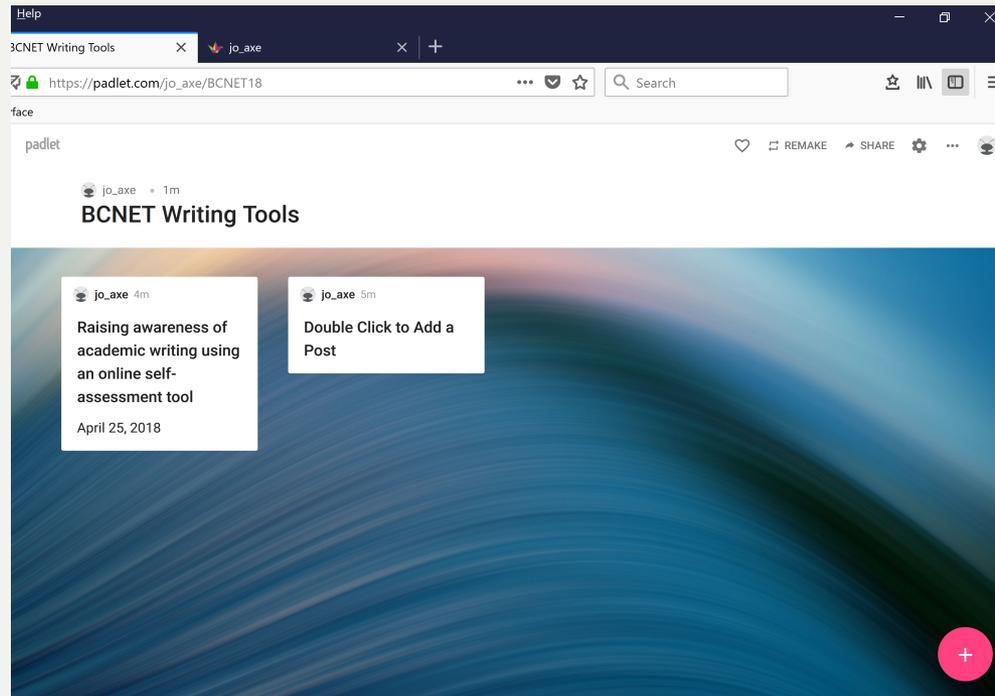


While You Wait...

Join our Padlet



https://padlet.com/jo_axe/BCNET18

Raising awareness of academic writing using an online self-assessment tool

BCNET Conference
April 25, 2018

Dr. Jo Axe
Dr. Elizabeth Childs
Mr. Keith Webster



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Acknowledgement of traditional lands

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the x^wməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) Nations. We are very grateful for the opportunity to live and learn here.



Introductions



Jo Axe

PhD
Professor and Director
School of Education and
Technology



Elizabeth Childs

PhD
Associate Professor and
MALAT Program Head
School of Education and
Technology



Keith Webster

MA
Instructional Designer
Centre for Teaching and
Educational Technologies

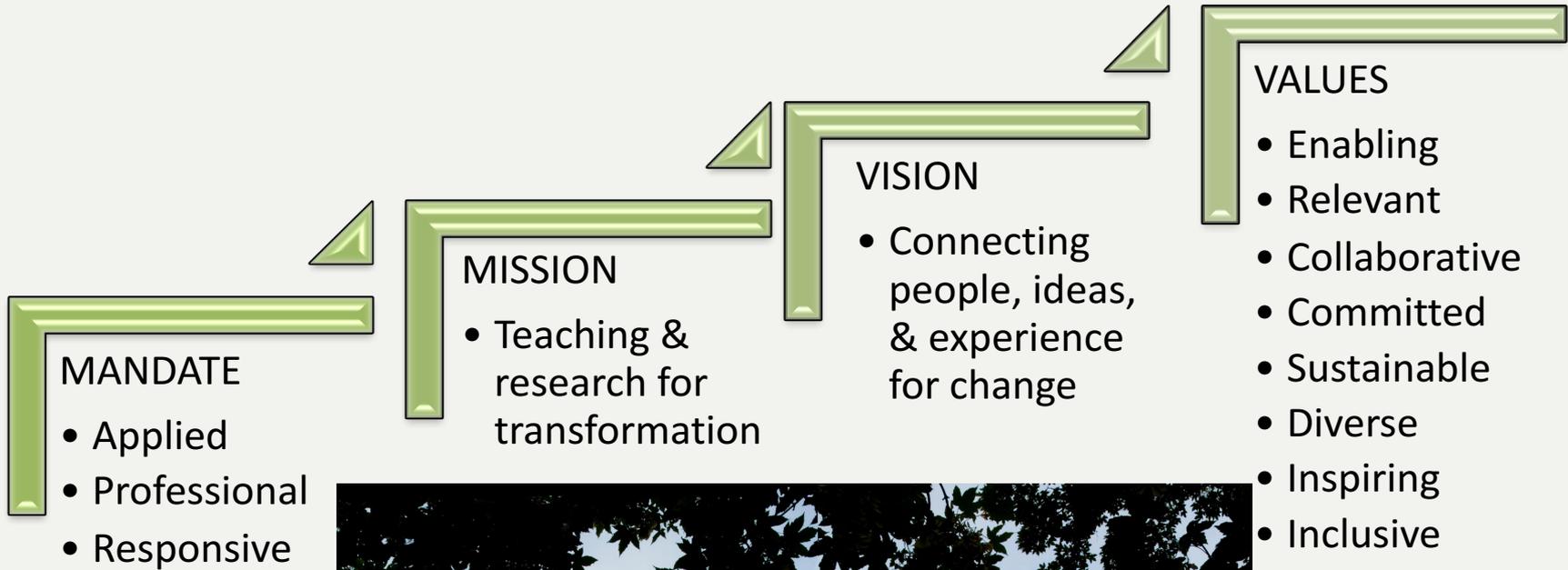
Overview of Session

- Background and Context
- Tool Selection Criteria
- Small group examination of writing tools
- Large group feedback and discussion
- Student feedback on writing tool used
- Next steps and brainstorming

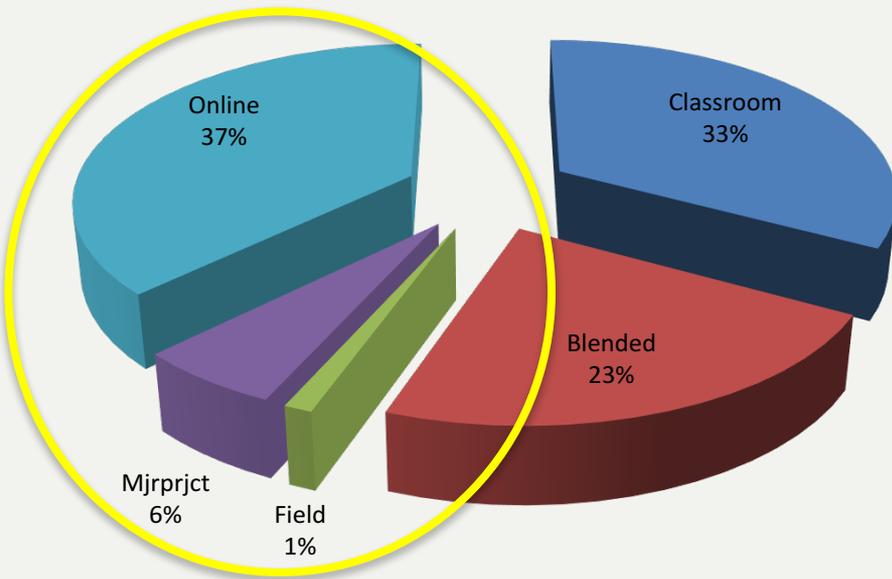
Takeaways...

- Appreciate the value of a self-assessment tool for academic writing
- Understand the key considerations for choosing a writing tool
- Reflect on the impact of a tool for improving student writing

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Course Delivery Modes



Key

Online	Fully online course
Mjrprjct	Projects & theses
Field	Field work & work placement
Blended	Blend of online & classroom

- Most programs = on-campus residencies plus online courses; some programs are offered fully online
- Much of RRU learning happens beyond F2F classrooms

Background and Program Context



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Background

- Axe, J., Bell, T., and Charlebois, K. (2013). Exploring students' self-perceptions of their academic writing research project
- Surveys sent 429
- Participants 122
- Themes included mixed impact; anxiety; lack of confidence; feedback; growth; teamwork
- How can we help: coaching; clear expectations; examples; feedback; proofreading; resources; training; **support**

Little or no Effect

“I'm not at all intimidated by it, but that is mostly likely because I did academic writing with my undergrad...” (77)



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Positive

“In learning appropriate writing styles, I notice that my participation in class is clear and concise; I am able to articulate what I am thinking in a strong way.” (74)



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Anxiety



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“It makes it very intimidating to sit down and write something. I always worry that it won’t be good enough.” (18)

Lack of Confidence



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“I think it effects it alot I am less willing to throw myself out there because I am worried about my skill level with writing.” (7)

Feedback



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“I am highly unmotivated when I do not get good feedback about my poor academic writing skills.” (65)

Growth

“I work hard to write effectively and as required for the MBA program. I need to work harder.” (98)



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Teamwork



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“My confidence in teamwork is very low as I compare myself to others and feel incompetent.” (25)

MALAT Program



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- Working professionals
- Majority between ages of 31 and 60
- Average age approximately 40
- Technology adept
- Masters level
- Online and blended pathways merge in 3rd course
- Two-year program

Program Context

- Pre-admission – English language assessment, but no writing pre-requisite
- Focus on academic writing in the program learning outcomes
- Student experienced with writing in a professional context (i.e. briefs, reports and white papers)

Assessment Context

- The program learning outcomes require writing
 - PLO # 1. Communicate and synthesize information and arguments at the graduate level.
- Academic papers required in the program
- Focus on critical thinking and writing
- Some students still struggle to make the distinction between professional writing and academic writing

The Writing Assessment Tools



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Tool Selection Process

- Worked with representatives from Centre for Teaching and Educational Technologies, School of Education and Technology and the MA in Learning and Technology program to define selection criteria for tools
- Worked to identify potential tools that might meet the need
- Reviewed the tools against the criteria
- Chose tool based on selection criteria and timing

Tool Selection Criteria

- Ease of use
- Aimed at graduate level writing – focus on grammar, paragraph structure
- Cost for individual student
- Use on multiple devices
- Types of results provided
- Data analytics gathered
- Universal design principles – accessibility
- Time to complete
- Ability to stop/start
- Other...

Potential Tools Identified

- PEG Writing Scholar
- English Language Writing Tool
- AWA Diagnostic Assessment
- Pearson My Writing Lab
- Writer's Diet
- Grammarly

Your turn....



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Small Group Activity

- In small groups, take 10 minutes and explore the writing tool assigned
- Record your observations in our Padlet:
 - Ease of use
 - Potential to flag areas for improvement in writing
 - What did not work for you?
 - What did work for you?
What additions would improve it?

https://padlet.com/jo_axe/BCNET18

Large Group Discussion

What worked?

What was challenging?



Large Group Discussion

What additional themes emerged?

MALAT Pilot



Tool Implementation

- English Language Assessment Tool open access
- Not mandatory
- Invitation was sent to 15 students in the fully online cohort
- Will be offered again in July for the blended cohort

Brainstorm...

- What tools do you know of that we have not accessed?
- How can we provide students with a paragraph self assessment tool?

Next Steps...

- Use self –assessment tool in upcoming MALAT program intake in July
- Request students write a paragraph to be assessed/feedback provided
- RRU writing centre workshop



Thank you, we would love
to hear from you

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